DEMOCRATIC
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Soviet Note Slams Foertsch as C-in-C

The appointment of a convicted war criminal as commander in chief of the West German forces is a "provocative, unfriendly act" the Soviet Union stated in a protest note to the West German Government on April 7th.

The note followed the appointment of nazi general Friedrich Foertsch to the post of Inspector General of the Bundeswehr, a rank equivalent to commander in chief.

The Soviet note recalled that Foertsch was "personally one of the most active organisers of atrocities in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union. Because of his crimes he was tried by a Soviet Military Tribunal and sentenced to 25 years imprisonment.

"In October 1955 Foertsch and a number of other war criminals were freed from prison before the expiration of their sentences, and were handed over to the authorities of the Federal Republic. The attention of the Federal Republic was drawn to the fact that these persons were war criminals who had committed the most serious crimes against peace and humanity."

The West German Government refused to accept the Soviet protest note. A government spokesman in Bonn described the Soviet note as a "transparent manoeuvre aimed at defaming the Bundeswehr and the Federal Republic". The spokesman said that no German officer with a criminal past had been re-employed by the Bundeswehr.

It was pointed out in Berlin that every single senior officer of the Bundeswehr had served in a senior position in the nazi Wehrmacht. Apart from Foertsch, there were a number of other leading officers who had served war crimes sentences, and there was documentary evidence of the war crimes committed by such top officers as General Adolf Heusinger, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee in Washington, and General Hans Speidel, Commander of NATO Ground Forces, Central Europe, although these men had never been brought to trial.

The West German authorities had made no attempt to show that General Foertsch was not guilty of the crimes for which he was convicted by the Soviet tribunal, it was stressed.

(Full details of the crimes and the trial of General Foertsch were given in GERMAN REPORT dated March 3rd 1961).

Eichmann Trial Upsets Bonn

The National Front of Democratic Germany, the organisation uniting all political parties and organisations in the GDR, made an official statement in East Berlin several days before the Eichmann Trial in Israel began. Here are excerpts from the statement:

SS Colonel Adolf Eichmann, one of the most frightful mass murderers of the Hitler regime, is being tried by an Israeli court. Together with him, the whole fascist system, which made the industrialised annihilation of human beings its policy, is being indicted at the bar of world opinion . . .

Eichmann and his atrocities covered the name of Germany with shame. After 1945, therefore, it was not only a human necessity, but also a requirement of national honour and self-preservation for the German people to settle accounts fully with all guilty people and their backers and to tear out the nazi evil by the roots. German militarism, chauvinism and race hatred had to be eliminated forever in the interests of the German people and in the interest of peace in Europe . . .

The nazi criminals, wherever they could be found on the territory of the German Democratic Republic, were soon sentenced. The transformation of economic and social relations in the German Democratic Republic represents a guarantee to the people of Europe that the terror of the past will never be repeated in this part of Germany, and that aggression and war will never be launched from the territory of the German Democratic Republic. All incitement of war or race hatred is a crime here, and is punished by the courts. In schools, literature and cultural centres the central theme of educational activities is peace and international friendship . . .

The people of the German Democratic Republic and all decent Germans demand in the name of Germany and in the name of Eichmann's victims the complete exposure of his crimes, his accomplices and his backers . . .

But the Bonn Government is trembling at the thought of the Eichmann trial . . . So they are circulating the assertion that the trial of Eichmann might damage "Germany's reputation".

What really damages Germany's reputation?

It is damaging to Germany and its reputation that of 17 Cabinet Ministers and Secretaries of State in Bonn no less than 12 were involved with nazism in the past.

. . . that 84% of the ambassadors and leading diplomats in the Bonn Foreign Office helped diplomatically to prepare Hitler's war of agression . . .

. . . that the same I. G. Farben people who supplied Adolf Eichmann the "Zyklon B" gas for his "final solution" again dominate the I. G. Farben concern . . .

. . . that Hans Globke, legal initiator of the annihilation of the Jews, is Adenauer's right-hand man in Bonn.

These facts not only damage Germany's reputation, they are dangerous for Europe and the world.

African, Asian Students Go East

Students from Nigeria, Sudan, Angola, Iraq and other Asian and African countries told journalists at a press conference in East Berlin on March 28th why they had decided to leave West Germany and continue their studies in the GDR.

They gave two main reasons: their economic difficulties in paying for their studies and for lodgings, especially in view of the frequent discrimination against coloured students; and secondly, the oppressive political atmosphere and suppression of all anti-colonialist opinions.

Mr Katta from Cameroun told the journalists: "I spent a month in Hamburg without any shelter because nobody would give me a room. I finally found emergency quarters for 7 marks a day. Then I got a heavy job in a rubber factory dragging hundred-pound bales around, and a room for which I had to pay 120 marks a month. I was forced to pay for the colour of my skin."

A student from Angola, who did not give his name for fear of reprisals against his family, told how he had worked 4 to 10 hours a day to pay for tuition and lodging and then been too tired to study properly.

Many students from Africa and Asia reported that rooms were refused them because of their nationality. Some were also refused admittance to cafés and other public places.

Mr Sulaiman, a Kurdish student from Lebanon, and Mr Williams from Nigeria told how they had taken part in demonstrations in West Germany to protest the murder of Patrice Lumumba. The demonstrations, though completely peaceful and orderly, had been broken up by police using truncheons and firehoses; some Africans had been severely injured. Mr Sulaiman said, "We cannot study in such a state with a clear conscience" and Al-Hakim Mohmoud from Iraq added, "In West Germany we found a country without either political or academic freedom and where the national feelings of foreign students are considered penal offences."

The student Hamed Machmed from Sudan who has already begun his studies in the GDR, said, "Here in the GDR all doors are open to us, and so are the hearts of the people. Here we have every possibility to study in a free atmosphere, in a country which speaks up for the interests of the nations which are still oppressed, and which works for friendship between all nationalities."

Other speakers at the conference stressed that tuition and health care are free of cost in the GDR, and that all foreign students get a generous scholarship. Rent in student hostels costs only 10 marks a month. No-one is barred because of colour.

Anti-A Marches in W. Germany

All major cities of West Germany witnessed demonstrations for peace and against atomic weapons over the Easter weekend. The meetings were in connection with a series of Aldermaston-type peace marches held in different parts of the country. Despite cold, rain and storm, numerous attempts to discourage or frighten the marchers by police and other government authorities, and, finally, despite the sharp attacks on the anti-atombomb demonstrators by leaders of the Social Democratic Party and the West German trade union federation, the Easter demonstrations were the biggest and best-organised action in years.

3000 participants belonging to the western wing of the demonstrations, meeting in the industrial city of Dortmund in the Ruhr, called for a halt to West German atomic armaments, an international ban on atomic weapons and general disarmament in the world. Guests from Britain, France and the Netherlands were also present.

The southwest group meeting in Heidelberg heard Pastor Martin Niemoeller, famed for his resistance to Hitler, criticise the Social Democratic and trade union leaders sharply for their bans on the marches. "We will not let up in our activities so long as atomic destruction threatens our country", he said.

In Munich, over 1000 people ended their three-day march with a protest meeting, at which the writer Erich Kaestner warned against the generals who planned to station atomic weapons facing the frontier of the GDR.

Other meetings of a similar nature were held in Frankfurt on Main, Hamburg, Bremen, Stuttgart and other cities. The march groups had started from four centres in different parts of the country and then fanned out to end up on Easter Monday in most major cities with closing demonstrations.

Five hundred atomic weapons opponents from West Germany also took part in the marches in Britain. 400 of these came from the Metal Workers' Union. Two representatives of the West German peace movement also spoke at the big demonstration on Trafalgar Square on April 3rd.

Ban One

West German police banned anti-nazis from the GDR from laying wreaths on the graves of nazi victims in the concentration camp of Belsen at the Easter weekend. The GDR delegation, consisting of former concentration camp inmates, was turned back at the frontier crossing point of Helmstedt. They were carrying wreaths from the Jewish Community in East Berlin, the Association of Evangelical Pastors, the survivors of Belsen, and the Committee of Anti-Fascist Resistance Fighters.

It was pointed out in Berlin that on April 23rd many thousands of West Germans will visit the GDR to attend the opening of the memorial on the site of Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Ban Two

The British Government refused to grant a visa to Professor Albert Norden, member of the Politbureau of the Socialist Unity Party of the GDR, to attend the National Congress of the British Communist Party at Easter. There were indications that the visa refusal was the result of representations made by the West German Government, since delegates from other countries were granted visas without difficulty. Commenting on the British ban, Professor Norden pointed out that he had been persecuted by the nazi regime, and that almost all his relatives had been gassed by the nazis; "I have not got the same sort of qualifications as nazi generals like Speidel and Heusinger, who never have any difficulty in visiting Britain" he said.

Professor Norden stated that in the past month a total of nineteen British M.P.s had been granted visas for the GDR; in the past 15 months 65 British journalists had toured Democratic Germany.

More Patience Advised

Official circles in the German Democratic Republik should be more patient in dealing with bourgeois experts, Walter Ulbricht, First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party and Chairman of the State Council advised in a speech to the Central Commitee at the end of March.

"Valuable citizens repeatedly leave the GDR because they have been treated bureaucratically and thoughtlessly by civil servants and Party officials" Walter Ulbricht said. "In this situation they lend an ear to the attempts at recruitment systematically made by Bonn.

"We must fight against this emigration, and especially against its reasons. Every single case in which someone leaves the Republic must be carefully investigated, to ascertain how far it was caused by bureaucratic and unfeeling attitudes on the part of our officials. We must not treat this question so lightly as we have in the past.

"We must aim at the establishment of relationships of real trust between our workers' and peasants' state and the older generation of intellectuals, who were brought up in the spirit of bourgeois ideology. Some of the older generation cling to traditions which they relinquish slowly, or to which they may cling until they die. They should be allowed to make the decision for themselves: nobody should exert pressure upon them.

"The ideological developments, the economic developments, and the change in the balance of power in the world make it possible for us to be patient. It is in our interests that the old generation of intellectuals should help the younger generation to become qualified experts; and even if some of the older people have ideas in their heads with which we do not agree, this will not make any difference to the victory of socialism.

"These outmoded ideas are no danger to socialism; but it would be dangerous if science and technology in the GDR did not develop rapidly enough".

Turning to the question of the younger generation, Walter Ulbricht stated:

"The young generation which is now growing up had no experience of the class struggles under capitalism, and the years of the anti-fascist struggle. This new generation has grown up under the favourable conditions provided by the workers' and peasants' state.

"Most of these young people have a good measure of knowledge; but they often come into internal conflicts because their book learning does not enable them to grasp the complicated problems presented by the great socialist changes at the present time. These young people still have to gather experience in the struggle against the enemies of the people, the West German imperialists and their right-wing Social Democratic assistants.

"This means that not simply revisionism is a danger, but also dogmatism. Some of our comrades, who were trained dogmatically in the social sciences at university and party schools, are not in a position to convince young people. These young people see a discrepancy between ideals and reality, and cannot reconcile the two. The people who are responsible for this are those who, in the schools and universities, taught them socialism in a dogmatic form, and neglected the connection between theory and practice.

"Marxism-Leninism is the most interesting and gripping subject in the world, but some of our propagandists, including professors of social sciences, simply present a series of schematic theses, something which is quite indigestible. They want to talk about political problems, but they want to talk about them sensibly."

Warsaw Pact States Say:

"Peace Treaty Needed"

The conclusion of peace treaties with the two German states is urgently necessary, the Warsaw Pact states agreed at a conference in Moscow at the end of March.

The communique issued after the meeting of the Political Advisory Council of the Warsaw Pact States on March 31st noted the increased danger to peace represented by nuclear weapons for the West German army, and stated:

"For the maintenance of peace it is urgently necessary that the remnants of the Second World War should be liquidated by the conclusion of a peace treaty with the two German states, and, in conjunction with this the conversion of the danger sport of West Berlin into a demilitarised Free City."

The meeting of the Warsaw Pact states was attended by leading representatives of all European People's Democracies and the Soviet Union, and observers from China, North Korea and Mongolia. Chairman of the meeting was Walter Ulbricht, First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany.

On his return to Berlin, Walter Ulbricht reported that the representatives of all Warsaw Pact states were agreed that the West German revenge-seekers were the greatest danger to peace in Europe. Walter Ulbricht stated:

"The West German militarists, by making territorial demands on other states, have set out once again along the path taken by Hitler. The Hitlerite General Heusinger plans to station rocket troops on the eastern frontier of the (West) German Federal Republic, and this is a serious threat to European peace . . .

"The Bonn Government and other aggressive imperialist forces wish to convert NATO into a fourth atomic power. This would give the Hitlerite generals decisive rights to co-determination in the question of using atomic weapons, and would mean a very real danger that they would utilise their position in order to implement their policy of revenge . . .

"The German Democratic Republic is the bastion of peace and international understanding in Germany, and the role of the Republic becomes ever more important in view of developments in West Germany. At the meeting of the Political Advisory Council we reported on the proposals made by the GDR for the peaceful settlement of the German problem. We stressed in particular that it would be in the interests of the German people and European peace if the two German states could reach an understanding on the renunciation of force, on an immediate arms stop, and on the creation of an atom-free and rocket-free zone in central Europe.

FROM OUR LETTER BOX

(From time to time GERMAN REPORT plans to publish a selection from our large post bag. Since some letter writers prefer to remain anonymous, the letters below are signed only with initials.)

For me the German problem is a very severe problem, a part of the great problem of peace and the very existence of man, therefore I am very glad to read GERMAN REPORT. It tells the truth about West German militarism and about the peaceful work in the GDR. Both things are very useful. Here in Denmark the government is white-washing the West German Government. But the Danish people have their experiences — as you know — with the German militarists. So they are not very willing to listen, they have not forgotten the five years from 1940–1945.

I think you know all this, but I should like to stress: it is important that GERMAN REPORT is always filled with facts about how nazism and militarism have no possibilities in the GDR. I also think it very important for GERMAN REPORT to answer the lies in other countries about the GDR. You have never said that the GDR is paradise on earth. That is good. The GDR may have its mistakes, as long as it is not militarist. I would not like to see GERMAN REPORT as a sensation-paper, and I do not find it dull, but perhaps a little make-up would help (sometimes a picture tells just as much as many words).

J. A., Bagsvaerd, Denmark

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My Labour Party organisation has opposed the entry of German troops into Britain, and an item from your paper brought this about.

E. S., London, England

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GERMAN REPORT comes to our library every fortnight. Along with other readers we read GERMAN REPORT with great interest and GERMAN REPORT is majestic in style, interesting to read and informative in scope. When we have discussions in our association, facts from GERMAN REPORT are highly useful.

We wish to bring to your attention that we frequently see articles on the supposedly bad economic conditions in the GDR in the newspapers. We often write letters to the newspapers explaining the great economic progress being made in the GDR using facts from GERMAN REPORT ...

We very much appreciate your hard efforts to add more news from GDR and facts about ex-nazis back in power in West Germany, statements of peaceful co-existence policy of the GDR, her industrial collaboration with other nations and from the comments on pastime events to the highly critical Berlin Notebook. In spite of its small size GERMAN REPORT has a few flaws. We want to see in GERMAN REPORT articles on life and culture in the GDR, profusely illustrated with colourful photographs. We shall be very much pleased to see a letters section, separate columms for cultural and technical news, international affairs ... We wish you increasing success in your noble fight against the destructive forces of war, with a firm determination to build a peaceful world ...

S. A., youth group secretary, Tirumangalam, India

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We have to read your paper in the English lessons of the 11th and 12th forms. I do it very often in my lessons and I would be glad if you publish more articles about literature such as the one on "Naked Among Wolves" (the novel about the little boy saved by prisoners in the nazi concentration camp of Buchenwald, the ed.). Most of the pupils know the novel by Bruno Apitz and I read this article first, before we started to speak about the novel. The report was easy to understand and very interesting.

I would like shorter articles. I need too much time to introduce the text.

E. B. (teacher), East Berlin

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Will you please remove my name from your mailing list.

I was originally under the impression that your publication was from Western Germany.

I am afraid that I consider your publication the results of talents better spent elsewhere. Those who are already in basic agreement with your position really need no further convincing. Those who are in basic disagreement with you will never believe even the facts which you may report, much less your opinions.

E. P., Lausanne, Switzerland

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I have been a regular reader of your paper since 1959 and so far I have been satisfied with the contents. Of course I do not believe that everything in East Germany is O.K., and maybe there is something good in West Germany, although I have not discovered anything yet. My view on Germany is this: In the West the authorities help to revive Nazism, in the East the authorities try to get rid of it, and this is a very significant difference. But I am not at all convinced that Anti-Nazism has penetrated all inhabitants in the GDR, in fact I doubt that even a majority of the GDR population are reliable anti-fascists. As long as Nazism exists — in East or West —animosity against Germany as a whole will linger on.

Anyhow, I think your paper is doing a good job in the struggle against fascism.

V. L., student, Oslo, Norway

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We have wished to give you our opinion on GERMAN REPORT for some time, so we greatly welcomed your questionnaire.

We find your articles topical, well-argumented yet easily readable. We greatly appreciate the humour in 'Berlin Notebook' but we would like it to live up more to its title, and give us a picture of Berlin proper ...

We found the article in the issue of July 2nd which quoted facts from the 'Economist' most useful. It would be helpful to have more such articles, supporting their case with actual figures, in order to convince the uninformed that the GDR is making real progress.

We are pleased to see articles by neutral observers such as the one by E. Hughes on his visit to a GDR jail.

A special appeal is due here to GERMAN REPORT. It has the opportunity of making out the case for Socialism to the people of Britain, producing evidence of the way of life in the Socialist country which is nearest to Britain in outlook and tradition.

It can do this by describing how various problems, that anybody here as well as there might be faced with, have been solved in the GDR.

Information on the following points might be useful:

What help is given to housewives who also go to work?

What possibilities are there for children who fail the eleven plus school examination?

How are widows helped, who are suddenly the sole breadwinners of the family?

What happens if a skilled workman is rendered unemployed by lack of raw material or lessening of demand and is given an unskilled job at lower rates?

If it can be proved that such problems are solved more satisfactorily there than here, it will encourage people to thumb a lift along 'the British Road to Socialism'.

V. L., 14 years, Birmingham

3 MEN IN A CAR PLANT

By Allen Mann

Every Friday morning, a group of about twenty-five men gather around a big conference table in the large Sachsenring Car Plant at Zwickau in the GDR, where 9000 men and women work. Their job is to check on what has been accomplished in the week past and decide on policy for the period ahead.

Of course, this management conference cannot make major decisions all by itself. It is responsible to the employees in the plant on the one hand, and to an "Association of Nationally-Owned Factories" covering the vehicle industry on the other. This latter body is, in its turn, responsible to the State Planning Commission in East Berlin and, ultimately, to the Cabinet and the People's Chamber. Nevertheless, the Friday meetings are the main occasion for guiding production, sales and other factory questions.

The people sitting around the big table include the factory director, the technical director, labour director, business manager, production manager and the heads of each of the plant's 12 sub-divisions. There are also a few other technical and business experts. Finally there is the plant trade union secretary, the secretary of the Free German Youth organisation, and the secretary of the factory Socialist Unity Party organisation.

Here are thumb-nail portraits of three of these men.

The Business Manager

Herr Richard Koerber is a robust, balding man of 52. He is one of the few plant leaders who did not come up the ladder after 1945. After his father, a bricklayer, had scraped to send him to business school after World War I, he got a job in a bicycle factory in his home town of Muehlhausen in Thuringia (now part of GDR). He slowly worked his way up to the position of department head in the sales department until he was finally drafted during the war. He was a corporal when he was wounded and captured near Lake Como in Italy in 1945.

He spent his POW period almost completely in a hospital. When he was discharged, in 1946, he returned to his home in the "Russian Zone". Here he found that his old plant had been dismantled for reparations, but that the workers there were trying to start up production again in the now publicly-owned plant. They asked him to help with the business side, and before long he had become business manager, a job he held until 1953, when he was offered the same job in the much larger car factory in Zwickau.

Another major event in his life was in 1946, when, remembering his family background and his old membership in the left-of-centre Office Workers' Union before Hitler, he joined the Socialist Unity Party only a few months after it had been formed by the Communist and Social Democratic Parties in the eastern part of Germany.

As business manager, Herr Koerber is responsible for a wide variety of fields. They include: supply of raw material and parts; sales, advertising and trade fairs; repair and spare part service for all customers, domestic and foreign; price, credit and other financial questions; contract and legal questions; transport, storage, the huge factory kitchens, the archives and several other minor additions, with a total of 900 department heads, cooks, financial experts, truck drivers and others.

What about Herr Koerber's personal life? Of course, he has no real financial worries, for the top men in the plant get paid between 1200 and somewhere near 2000 a month, plus the use of a factory-owned car. Most people here would find these salaries high, but by no means unreasonable, considering the very great responsibility, the training needed for the job and the extra hours required. (A top-notch worker in the plant may earn up to 1100 marks a month).

Ghana's Deputy Planning Minister Duowona being shown around the Sachsenring Plant by Business Manager Richard Koerber.

Herr Koerber lives in a single room in Zwickau during the week, and drives home weekends to Muehlhausen, 120 miles away, where he has a one-family house, a wife and a 17-year-old son. His son is now an apprentice in a car plant (but not his father's) and hopes to become an automotive engineer some day. On weekends Herr Koerber putters in his rock garden or goes driving, which is his favourite pastime. He is chairman of the Zwickau branch of the Automobile Club, and is kept very busy weekday evenings, what with political and factory meetings, meetings of the Automobile Club, and guiding around some of the many foreign visitors to the plant.

Before concluding our interview, Herr Koerber told me a few facts about the other five top managers in the plant. Every one comes from a working-class family, and almost all of them were themselves workers until they got the opportunity to study after 1945. None of them were nazis.

The Party Secretary

One of the most important men to take part in the weekly management meetings at Sachsenring Car Factory is the head of the Socialist Unity Party organisation in the plant, Walter Oelschlegel. Here is his story:

Herr Oelschlegel is now 51 and comes from a textile worker's family in Kirchberg, a small town near Zwickau. Like his father and his brothers, he suffered greatly in every crisis and depression that hit Germany between the First and Second World War. In 1927, at the age of 17, he had become a member of the communist youth organisation, and shortly afterwards, of the Communist Party, and he kept his membership through unemployment, fascism and worse. After Hitler came to power, Herr Oelschlegel became a member of one of the four little communist youth resistance groups in his home

Fringe Benefits in the Car Plant

1. A factory clinic with ten doctors and dentists, equipment for bath, massage and ray treatments, modern X-ray apparatus, an operating room and regular medical examinations of all employees, all without charge.

2. Next-to-nothing care of employees' children, 60 babies and toddlers at the nursery, 150 3–6 year-olds in the 3 kindergartens, 110 older children in the after-school centre.

3. 800 employees' children sent to summer camp every year. For 3 weeks, the parents pay less than 1 days' pay, or nothing at all.

4. Nearly 2000 holiday tickets every year, for low-cost 2-week holidays at lake or seashore or in mountains. Tent camps for interested apprentices or young workers. A few international cruises every year on trade union's holiday ship.

5. Hot midday meals every day (for less than 20 minutes' average pay).

6. A trade union clubhouse with dances, films, lectures, a restaurant and library.

7. Sport groups of all kinds, with free equipment, training and training area.

8. Laundry service for couples where both work, a shoe repair shop, mending and clothes repair workshops and shopping facilities in the plant.

9. Job training courses free. Last year 1500 took part, this year 3000 are expected to take courses. 200 employees sent to college or technical studies from the factory in 1960 alone.

10. 23 cultural groups, free and with free instruments, etc. They include a chorus (60–70 members), dance band, brass band, accordeon band, string orchestra; philately circle (over 40 members), drawing and painting circle, amateur writers' circle (20 members), home sewing and tailoring group, modern dancing classes, folk dance group, etc.

11. Theatre subscriptions for drama, opera and operetta, with half-price tickets (500 have subscriptions). Similar arrangements for concerts (with 300 participants).

town. One after the other, the Gestapo found and arrested the members of three of these groups; only one was never detected. But his group was caught. In 1936, he and seven other friends were brought to trial. He got a 2½ year jail sentence for high treason; he served ten months of this sentence in solitary confinement. But after serving his sentence he was not released but sent instead to Buchenwald Concentration Camp, where he remained until the camp prisoners freed themselves a few hours before the American troops arrived in April 1945. During this time, he was active in the camp's underground organisation.

After liberation, Oelschlegel hurried back to his home town. The new conditions there were soon apparent; Walter Oelschlegel, once an unemployed worker and a concentration camp inmate, was elected chairman of the local town council. He held this and a number of posts in the new Socialist Unity Party until 1955, when he was delegated to study at the party's special college. After completing two years of study there, he got the job of Party Secretary in the big Sachsenring Plant.

Here he is responsible for an organisation comprising approximately one-sixth of the plant's employees and organised into 120 groups of about 8–12 members each in all departments. The party's main job is to explain how producing more cars as efficiently as possible will help to increase the standard of living of everyone in the GDR, including the employees here at Sachsenring. They point out that the big tax on the cars, as on most luxury items, does not flow into anyone's private pockets but is used by the government to build homes, roads, schools and hospitals and to construct other factories which will mean more, better and cheaper commodities for everyone. They also explain that raising the GDR's living standard is the best way to win the hearts and minds of people in both parts of Germany and thus prevent the West German Government from starting a conflict. The party tries to encourage the workers' initiative in various ways, to solve problems of all kinds, to help even in personal difficulties if it is approached, and to organise on political questions. (When I was there a big rally was held to protest the murder of Patrice Lumumba.) A weekly factory newspaper is published by the party to help its work.

The Trade Union Secretary

Werner Schoenfeld, the trade union secretary, is younger than the other two men, in his mid-thirties, I estimated. The son of a lumberworker in East Prussia (now a part of Poland), he and his family of ten brothers and sisters were driven from their homes in 1944 by the nazis ahead of the advancing Soviet armies. He learnt the job of mechanic here in eastern Germany and worked at this trade in several different factories. Before long he was elected union shop steward, and in 1954 he was delegated to study at the Trade Union College — two years as a full-time student and four years of correspondence courses. He recently completed these courses and now has a degree as economist. He has been secretary of the trade union organisation in Sachsenring since 1956.

His job includes a wide variety of activities — from working out the contract between workers and management, representing the workers in any conflicts that occur, supervising and encouraging social, cultural, educational activities of all kinds, checking on safety measures, and lots more. Conflicts are much less frequent here than in a capitalist factory, of course. Everyone, both management and workers, is employed by the same nation-wide "employer"; nobody gets any profits by cutting down on wages or worsening working conditions; everybody, management and workers, wins out if production increases, not through speed-up but through rationalisation and automation. They profit not only indirectly by the long-run increase in standard of living, but also because of the increased bonuses when plans are fulfilled or over-fulfilled. That is why grievances are about relatively minor matters here, and why representatives of union, party and management can talk together cooperatively without being at loggerheads.

PENCILS TO CUBA

Cuban children will receive a present of pencils, notebooks and many kinds of toys when the GDR's 10,000-ton freighter "Schwerin" arrives in Havana in mid-April. The shipment was collected by the Free German Youth organisation and the Young Pioneers children's organisation in the port city of Rostock. The school supplies are meant to help in the big campaign to wipe out illiteracy in Cuba in 1961, and will be followed by more shipments soon.

SPORT ON ICE

By Bill Rogers

The GDR ice hockey team recently won a double victory in Switzerland; it won fifth place in a tough tournament just behind the traditional Big Four of the game (Canada, Czechoslovakia, USSR, Sweden), beating the Olympic champion USA team into the bargain; and it won the special prize for fairness. In the same tournament the West German ice hockey organisation sank to an all-time low in just about everything. Since the ice hockey story is typical of how sports and politics are tied up together in Germany in general, here is a short summary of developments on the ice rinks.

* * *

As in most sports, the GDR started out at the bottom in ice hockey after the war. The first championship in 1949 was won by a team which was accused by its opponents of concealing a secret reserve of flour in the old truck used to carry the players. The flour soup evidently gave the players the edge they needed against their even hungrier foes. There was not a single ice rink in the whole country, so training went on only when the ponds froze over. There was no steel piping available for ice rinks.

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In 1950 the first ice rink was built. Made by combining two bombed-out ruins in the stockyards area of East Berlin, it was cooled from nearby packinghouses. The arena was named after Werner Seelenbinder, leading German wrestler and athlete who had been killed by the nazis because he was a communist. As with all other sports, all young people could play and use the expensive equipment for next to nothing. But there was almost no tradition and even less experience in the game here in the eastern part of Germany.

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To get experience, regular games against good foreign teams were necessary. To arrange these, the GDR's ice hockey organisation needed membership in the international ice hockey organisation. Here West Germany stepped in with politics. It and all the allies it could muster vetoed every attempt by the GDR organisation to join the world league. Year after year their application was turned down, usually on the grounds that one organisation from each country was enough. This same practice was followed in all sports by West Germany.

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Friendly countries like the Soviet Union and Poland helped the GDR as best they could by sending quasi-national teams as "city-wide selections" or "trade union selections" to play the inexperienced GDR athletes. The record up till April 5th 1953 against such teams was 20 games lost, none won. On that date, a 9 : 3 triumph over Hungary broke the jinx and made GDR sport fans go wild. An even greater victory followed in 1954; despite all attempts of West Germany, the GDR ice hockey group was voted into the world ice hockey league, permitting official games with foreign teams. As in other sports, the slow but steady progress of GDR athletes plus a let-up in the cold war stymied the West German efforts to isolate the GDR players.

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The GDR national ice hockey team chalked up occasional victories over teams like those of Belgium, Norway, Finland, Poland, Japan and Austria. It was still second or third grade, but coming up fast. It showed its progress at the World Championships in Moscow in 1957. Then the West German opponents struck again, hard. They lured away the GDR head trainer with a high-salaried, fame-bringing job in West Germany. West German sport columns triumphed about his "choosing freedom". (Some time later, he deserted his new team, taking as much as he could with him, but the damage to the GDR had been done.) In the World Championships at Prague in 1959, the West German team beat the GDR players 8 : 0, while the old GDR trainer called them names from the West German side. After their defeat, they stood quietly at attention while the West German anthem was played, although the song ("Deutschland Ueber Alles") has been hated and rejected in East Germany and the GDR since 1945.

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In 1960, as in 1956, the GDR ice hockey players were unable to play at the Olympic Games, since only one German team was permitted to go, and the West Germans won the deciding games. 1960 was also the year when the flag problem began to plague German sports. Late in 1959, the GDR added an emblem with an ear of grain, a hammer and compasses to the German red, black and gold flag, so as to distinguish its flag from that of West Germany. Since West Germany considers officially that the GDR does not exist, it also refused to recognise this flag, and tried to forbid its being flown anywhere in West Germany, West Berlin or even in foreign countries where it has influence. The idea was to prevent the GDR from being represented in international meetings, athletic or otherwise, and thus keep the GDR isolated.It even extended its ban to the GDR emblem on the sport uniforms of the GDR players. Games between West German and GDR teams sank to a minimum in West Germany, but after several unpleasant incidents, many western countries decided not to let West Germany tell them what flags they should allow or forbid.

* * *

March 1961: The young GDR team beat Norway and entered Group A of the World Championships in Switzerland. It would have been satisfied to place 8th and last in this group, which included the world's best teams. But the team showed how far it had come by holding Canada to a 0 : 0 tie score till near the end of the game, by doing surprisingly well against Sweden and Czechoslovakia, and by beating the USA 6 : 5. The American team, though more than unhappy about being beaten by an upstart team, naturally did it the usual honours and stood at attention to the GDR flag and national anthem. But the last game of the championship for the GDR was against West Germany, which had not done nearly as well in its games. West German authorities, from Adenauer downwards, were confronted by a dilemma. They had tried hectically, and failed, to have the GDR flag barred from the Championships. Now they faced the very likely possibility that their team would have to stand at attention while that flag was raised and the GDR national anthem played (as the GDR had correctly done two years before). This was too much for them however. Adenauer and Foreign Minister Brentano themselves seem to have given the order to forfeit the game rather than be courteous to a possible winning GDR team. That is what they did, earning boos from the Swiss crowd and the disgust of thousands of fairminded sport fans everywhere. The leadership of the international ice hockey organisation, angered at this violation of rules, promises and courtesy, announced that West Germany could not play in the next World Championship in two years (in the USA) unless the ice hockey organisation, the over-all sports organisation and also the West German Government pledged to keep to the rules.

In one sport after another, the GDR has been breaking through the ring imposed by West Germany. Slowly but surely, the West German authorities have begun to isolate themselves in a way which hurts them and especially their own athletes more than anyone else. The Swiss World Championship was the best example of this thus far.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

Hard-working station-masters and civic worthies in Britain look forward to receiving the O.B.E., the Order of the British Empire, when they reach retiring age; I wonder whether they know that the same distinction was recently conferred upon a keen nazi.

A few weeks ago I was moderately astonished to see that Queen Elizabeth had appointed Herr Hans Ritter von Lex an honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire. The name rang a bell in my memory, but all I could recall offhand was that this gentleman had been a high-ranking civil servant under Hitler, and, until his retirement a few months ago, a high-ranking civil servant in Bonn.

But this week, when I was looking up something else, I stumbled upon a letter which told me a little more about him. The letter, dated April 25th 1938, was signed by Hans Frick, nazi Minister of the Interior, and was addressed to "Deputy of the Fuehrer, Brown House, Munich". It was a proposal for the promotion to the rank of Ministerial Counsellor of three civil servants, one of whom was Herr Hans Ritter von Lex. The letter stated:

"Senior Government Counsellor Ritter von Lex, whom I have been able to observe since he began to work in the Reich Ministry of the Interior on September 10th 1933, has proved that he is ready at any time to work ruthlessly for the cause of the National Socialist State . . . I therefore suggest that some remarks about the National Socialist Party which he uttered years ago in the electoral campaign should no longer be held against him, and that he should receive the promotion which he so richly deserves."

Just incidentally, there seems to me to be a slightly moth-eaten flavour about the the title of the Order of the British Empire. However, there are still Knights of the long-dead Holy Roman Empire, so I suppose there can also be Knight Commanders of the almost-as-defunct British Empire.

Perfect Panic

The West German authorities have been thrown into a perfect panic by the fear that the Eichmann Trial, about which you will know more by the time you receive this copy of GERMAN REPORT, will remind people of the monstrous crimes committed by the nazis. Of course, if they had a clear conscience, there would be no need for them to panic; but with so many influential nazis in leading places in the state, their fears are understandable.

The panic is having some good effects, however. In their efforts to put up a good alibi, the West German authorities are having at least to go through the motions of rounding up war criminals. Some time ago, under public pressure, mainly from abroad, a central office was set up at Ludwigsburg in West Germany, charged very belatedly with the task of investigating nazi crimes. (It is worth noting here that for the first ten years of its existence the West German authorities did not even admit that there had been any such crimes; official circles always referred to "so-called war crimes" and convicted and executed war criminals were always called "war sentencees".)

This investigation office at Ludwigsburg suddenly announced on March 28th that it has prepared files on about 1000 of the surviving nazi murderers now known to be living in West Germany. It is good news that something is being done about them at last; but I very much doubt whether more than a small proportion of these nazis will in fact be brought to justice, for the actual prosecution of these criminals lies in the hands of the justice departments of the various provinces, and a high proportion of the state attorneys who have to do the prosecuting have themselves got war criminal records. In any case, the people who have so far been arrested have, without exception, been third-rank criminals, the bully boys who did the actual dirty work in the gas chambers and firing squads. The big snots, like State Secretary Globke, have been left untouched.

But the Ludwigsburg office, in announcing how busy it had been, did let slip an important bit of information. It stated that its investigations showed that about 80,000 Germans had actually taken part in the concentration camps and the massacres conducted by the special mobile massacre squads. As the "New York Herald Tribune" commented on March 30th: "The impact of the new statistic is to lessen the credibility of assertions that Nazi Germany's extermination of Jews and other victims was the action of a small handful of criminals."

There, But For the Grace of God . . .

"Eichmann's faceless insignificance may well give to his indictment a quite unexpected significance. As he stands there in the dock, the world will be inclined to say: 'There, but for the grace of God, goes any one of a score of ex-Nazis who are now Adenauer's leading officials.'

"Ben Gurion has been at pains to establish friendly relations between Israel and the Federal Republic, and I doubt whether it was his intention, when he had Eichmann abducted, to stage the indictment of the whole German Beamtentum (civil service). But that is one of the most likely consequences of the case."

(Richard Crossmann, M.P., in the "New Statesman" London, March 31st)

Fight Against Death

The following note is unfortunately all too true. In 1958 the West German Social Democratic Party launched a campaign against nuclear weapons with the slogan "Fight Atomic Death". After a few big and well-supported meetings and demonstrations, the campaign was allowed to die away.

In connection with the general election due in West Germany this autumn, a new campaign has been started. To fight against nuclear weapons meant treading on too many toes, so the new campaign is less controversial. Its slogan is "Fight Against Death on the Roads".

I have nothing against a campaign for road safety, but . . .

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